
FEDERAL ENERGY REGULATORY COMMISSION



WASHINGTON, D.C. 20426

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

October 2, 2002

News Media Contact:

Tamara Young-Allen

202-502-8680

INTERAGENCY AGREEMENT TO IMPROVE COORDINATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW OF NATURAL GAS PIPELINES

The Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) and nine other federal agencies have committed to coordinate their efforts to bring about a more efficient use of time and resources without compromising their respective jurisdictional responsibilities in an interagency agreement issued by the Council on Environmental Quality.

The interagency agreement states that FERC will be the lead agency responsible for environmental review of interstate natural gas pipelines under the National Environmental Policy Act. In its role as lead agency, FERC will work closely with the other agencies to identify and resolve issues early in the gas pipeline review process, and attempt to build a consensus among other governmental agencies and their stakeholders. The agencies also pledged to expedite the environmental review and permitting of natural gas pipeline projects.

The agreement calls for communication and cooperation with FERC and with each agency to coordinate schedules, identify concerns, share data, coordinate requests for additional information and cooperate in developing alternative routes, actions and mitigation measures.

In signing the agreement, the other agencies also endorse FERC's prefiling procedures established for natural gas pipeline proposals before formal applications are filed. The agreement and the prefiling procedures emphasize the importance of early communication with all stakeholders, including pipeline applicants, landowners and other state, local and Federal agencies.

-more-

R-02-42

The agreement is effective immediately. Along with FERC, the other signatories are the Departments of Army, Agriculture, Commerce, Energy, Interior, Transportation; the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation, the Council on Environmental Quality, and the Environmental Protection Agency.

A copy of the agreement may be found on FERC's website, www.ferc.gov.